

TLG Bolton

Concorde House, 2 Frederick Street, Farnworth, Bolton BL4 9AL

Inspection dates

24–26 April 2018

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Inadequate |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The proprietor and leaders have taken effective action to address the failings identified at the previous inspection to meet all of the independent standards.
- The new headteacher has redesigned the curriculum. It is adaptable and informs pupils' individual plans for learning. Pupils make good progress because of the individual support that they receive.
- TLG provides development opportunities for staff to ensure that teaching and learning continue to improve.
- Leaders have put in place clear arrangements to check on the quality of the school's work. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils' conduct is very good. Pupils engage in their learning because of the excellent relationships that they have with adults in the school.
- Staff provide pupils with the time to talk to adults about their feelings. Staff are highly successful in managing pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- Clear assessment informs teachers' planning for pupils' next steps in learning.
- Pupils start at the school with a wide range of abilities, which are generally lower than the standard expected for their age. Focused teaching provides support for pupils to fill the gaps in their learning.
- During their time at the school, pupils' attendance improves dramatically. Although these improvements are pronounced, leaders are aware of the need to have higher expectations of some pupils to ensure their full participation.
- The science curriculum is underdeveloped and lacks resources. As such, the development of pupils' skills in science is not fully effective.
- The school effectively builds upon pupils' strengths to achieve qualifications in functional skills and relevant GCSEs. However, pupils have strong preferences in their work. Leaders are aware of the need to develop pupils' attitudes to learning so they make similar progress in English and mathematics.
- Teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of the quality of pupils' contributions to discussions in lessons.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - pupils improve their investigative science skills
 - teachers set higher expectations for the contributions pupils make when discussing their learning
 - pupils' attitudes towards learning English and mathematics improve so that they make similar progress in both of these subjects.
- Further improve attendance by setting high expectations for all pupils to attend regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The proprietor and leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. They have taken swift action to remedy the inadequacies in safeguarding identified at the last inspection.
- This is a forward-thinking organisation that is firmly committed to improving the lives of the pupils who experience difficulties in mainstream settings. Knowledgeable staff support pupils well to manage their social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The new headteacher has brought certainty and purpose to the school. Her direction is improving the quality of teaching and learning through frequent checks that support staff to improve. TLG also provides a programme of professional development, which staff value.
- The headteacher is developing the school's curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. She has skilfully interwoven the school's aims, subject content and pupils' targets to form an adaptable curriculum. This individualised curriculum effectively fills the gaps in pupils' learning. As a result, pupils make good progress. Leaders tailor pupils' studies to focus on relevant qualifications, such as GCSEs and functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. However, pupils' subject-specific skills in science are yet to be fully developed. This is largely due to a lack of resources.
- The headteacher has created a culture of ambition that is raising aspirations for pupils' achievement. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. This enables pupils to feel settled and supported and has improved pupils' attitudes towards learning, as well as their behaviour, attendance and their overall welfare.
- Leaders' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is clear and accurate. Improvement plans provide specific and measurable targets so that senior leaders can monitor and refine actions to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Staff develop well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding through discussions about current affairs and trips to places of interest, such as Manchester Museum. The projects that pupils undertake foster an appreciation of other faiths, such as when comparing the similarities of different religious festivals. Pupils appreciate the Christian values of the school because of its accepting and supportive ethos.
- Leaders promote British values effectively as these are woven into the curriculum. Pupils' work on what it means to be British ensures that they know each of the values in detail. Pupils know how these values relate to their own lives and use them well to inform their choices and actions.
- Leaders promote equality effectively. They thread an appreciation of others and the protected characteristics throughout the curriculum. Pupils accept others' views and know that their own views are accepted. Staff build pupils' confidence and provide excellent support to prepare pupils appropriately for life in modern Britain.
- Communication with placing schools and local authorities has greatly improved since the last inspection. Leaders provide regular updates to those that commission places at the school.

Governance

- Since the last inspection, the proprietor and the management committee have raised the quality of oversight in the school. The proprietor has a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. TLG provides an effective external source of evaluation for the proprietor. Regular reports from the headteacher provide updates on the quality of provision at the school. The management committee questions effectively all aspects of the school's performance to promote improvement.
- The arrangements to manage the performance of staff, including that of the headteacher, are well understood by the proprietor and monitored throughout the year.
- There is a continuing commitment from the proprietor to the community in and around Farnworth. One parent with whom the inspector spoke said, 'They can see the potential in my child so she can be positive about her life and her future.'

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Since the previous inspection, the proprietor and management committee have acted swiftly to remedy the failings in safeguarding identified at the previous inspection. Where issues arise, senior leaders take effective action to protect pupils from harm.
- Safeguarding at the school is distinctive because pupils are given time to talk. Staff provide mentoring and coaching based on pupils' needs. Pupils feel safe because of the excellent relationships they have with staff at the school. They discuss aspects of safeguarding as part of their learning in a safe and meaningful way in the context of their own experiences.
- Leaders update the staff through regular training and the training for new staff is comprehensive. There is now a culture of vigilance in the school. Staff have a good awareness of the school's policy, which is available on the school's website. The safeguarding policy incorporates the most recent government guidance.
- Leaders ensure that staff are aware of the signs of radicalisation and extremism. The curriculum provides pupils, all of whom are vulnerable, with the confidence to know right from wrong.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Due to the small numbers of pupils at the school, support for their learning is individualised and immediate. Staff provide feedback in accordance with the school's policy and pupils act on this to improve their work. All current pupils are disadvantaged and make good progress from their starting points because of the individual support they receive.
- Pupils read as part of the normal classroom activities, such as when reading definitions from a dictionary. They are confident about reading in front of others and do so with fluency and clear comprehension. Staff question pupils' understanding of language constantly. Where necessary, staff provide highly effective phonics work to ensure that pupils pronounce words correctly. Pupils' books are matched to their ability, interests and

the topic studied.

- Pupils build well on their prior knowledge. They learn well from their mistakes. Staff are adept at knowing when to move pupils on and when to consolidate their learning. This is informed by regular assessments to identify the gaps in pupils' learning. The work provided relates well to pupils' everyday experiences. For example, pupils learn basic work on percentages, and progress to calculate percentage increases in the prices of different products. Pupils apply their understanding fluently through relevant opportunities to solve problems in real-life contexts so that learning is meaningful.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards the school. Representatives of the commissioning schools, the local authority and parents and carers all agree that pupils make significant strides in their outlook towards learning while at the school. The focus on developing pupils' functional skills ensures that pupils are prepared to move to other schools that may offer different qualifications.
- Pupils learn most effectively when there are high expectations for the quality of their responses. However, staff do not set consistently high expectations for pupils' verbal contributions to discussions and too readily accept answers which lack thought.
- Pupils commit to improving their work, for example when redrafting their written work to produce a letter. They consolidate their skills through frequent practice. Teaching and learning build on pupils' strengths. However, leaders are aware of the need for balancing the importance pupils place upon subjects, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Reports to parents are based on the assessments of pupils' skills and feelings. Reports provide information on pupils' relationships with themselves, others and the curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are developing their confidence and take pride in their work. They are positive and goal-orientated because of the clear guidance and support that they receive from adults at the school. The attitudes of current pupils are positive, which is seen in the improving quality of their work. Pupils show respect for each other and for adults.
- Pupils receive careers advice through the constant discussions that they have with staff. Staff skilfully ensure that learning is purposeful so that pupils can see the relevance in what they are learning to inform their aspirations for the future. Staff provide pupils with the space to be themselves and think through their own preferences. Leaders also commission external advice to ensure impartiality.
- The school is an orderly environment that is specifically set up to deal with the needs of pupils. It is organised and clear of any clutter. Staff provide effective support for pupils' social, emotional and mental health by listening to their views and discussing matters of interest to the pupil.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and display a good awareness of the effects of bullying. They learn about their own physical and emotional well-being, such as through work on sexual health and contraception.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school environment is calm and organised. Staff set clear rules for behaviour around three themes of being ready to learn, being safe and showing respect for others. Pupils say that behaviour between pupils in the school is good and that their own views are respected. Pupils conduct themselves well in school. There is no disruption to lessons.
- Leaders and pupils agree that incidents of poor behaviour are rare and, when they do occur, they are dealt with effectively. The school's own logs show a decrease in the incidents with which staff have had to deal. This is due to the staff meeting pupils' needs.
- Those responsible for placing pupils at the school do so because of the way in which staff cater for the social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils. This is achieved through the calm and nurturing ethos of staff. Pupils' behaviour is well managed through one-to-one interactions. The relationships in the school are excellent.
- Pupils' attendance has greatly increased from their prior attendance in other settings. However, leaders accept that even higher expectations for some pupils would see this improve even further.
- Exclusion is used rarely but justifiably. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well in accordance with the school's policy.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils start at the school with attainment that is generally lower than the expectations for their age. They work well at the school to consolidate their learning. Staff provide work that allows pupils to fill the gaps in their learning.
- Pupils' workbooks in a range of different subjects show that they make good progress from their starting points. Staff build the curriculum around pupils' needs. They respond to pupils' interests and preferences. Pupils work towards relevant qualifications, such as GCSEs and functional skills qualifications. However, because the school has a philosophy of building on pupils' strengths, they favour either English or mathematics. The progress in their books clearly indicates their preferences because their progress, although good overall, is not always equally good in these subjects. Leaders are aware of the need to address pupils' attitudes to ensure that they achieve equally well in both subjects.
- From their individual starting points, the work in pupils' books shows that they make strong progress in their writing and mathematics. Pupils read confidently and with expression. This is due to precise assessments that inform pupils' individual learning. Staff assess pupils' capabilities on entry to the school to allow them to track pupils' progress. These assessments are accurate and show that pupils make at least good progress in English, mathematics and other areas of learning.
- Pupils are successful in gaining awards, such as functional skills awards in English and mathematics. Some pupils continue to work towards GCSEs in English and mathematics.
- Staff at the school turn around pupils' attitudes towards learning. Many are disaffected when they come to TLG Bolton. The nurture and individual attention pupils receive ensure that they are committed to learning and positive about their future. Improvements to

pupils' attitudes towards learning, attendance and behaviour are testament to the support that they receive.

- Pupils at the school are developing their confidence to accept who they are and to manage their feelings and emotions. Leaders focus well on preparing pupils for their future. The large majority of pupils go on to reintegrate into mainstream education in either schools or colleges.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 142535 |
| DfE registration number | 350/6003 |
| Inspection number | 10053750 |

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

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| Type of school | Other independent school |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 4 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 4 |
| Proprietor | Farnworth Baptist Church |
| Chair | Reverend John Bradbury |
| Headteacher | Susie McGibbon |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £14,976 |
| Telephone number | 01204 770 797 |
| Website | www.tlgbolton.org.uk/ |
| Email address | susie.mcgibbon@tlg.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 16–17 May 2017 |

Information about this school

- TLG Bolton is operated by Farnworth Baptist Church in partnership with TLG, the education charity. The management committee comprises the proprietor's representative, Reverend John Bradbury, representatives from TLG and the headteacher.
- Since the school's previous inspection in May 2017, a new headteacher has been appointed. She started at the school in September 2017.
- TLG Bolton is an alternative provider for secondary-aged pupils, which is commissioned by mainstream schools, pupil referral units and local authorities to provide part-time education. All pupils have experienced difficulties in mainstream settings and are dual

registered with the placing body. The school does not use any other alternative provision.

- Pupils attend for either two or four days a week. Pupils attend this school for an average of two terms. The placing school, pupil referral unit or local authority is responsible for ensuring that the pupil's full-time education is fulfilled. Pupils who attend the school typically have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school operates from one location in Farnworth, near Bolton.
- The school has a strong Christian ethos.
- All of the pupils who currently attend the school are disadvantaged.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils who attend the school are of White British heritage.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning and examined pupils' work in mathematics, writing and across the curriculum.
- The inspector listened to individual pupils read in the course of lessons.
- The inspector spoke with pupils formally and informally during lessons.
- The inspector made observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the school and on the telephone, and took account of the responses from staff who completed the staff survey. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to take these into account.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and the headteacher to discuss all aspects of the school's provision.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation and the school's evaluation of its own performance, including its areas for development.
- The inspector looked at attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding documentation, considered how this related to daily practice and spoke with staff and pupils about aspects of safety.
- The inspector reviewed the record of checks carried out on the appointment of new staff, and inspected the premises to ensure that the school meets the independent school standards. The school's website was also checked for compliance.
- The inspector spoke with representatives of the schools that commission places at the school, and the local authority.
- The Department for Education commissioned Ofsted to carry out a standard inspection earlier in the cycle than previously planned at the school's request. This was the first inspection following the one that took place in May 2017.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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